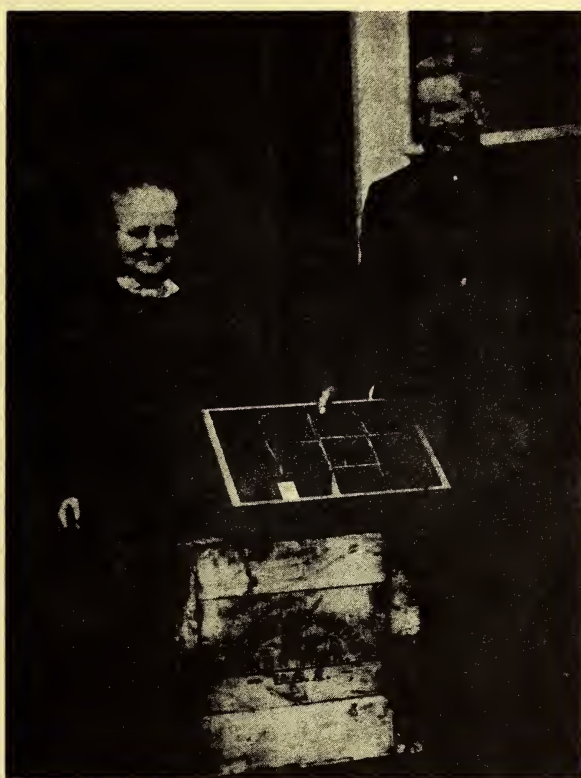


# STORY of the FRANK KNOWLES FAMILY



by

Ruth Knowles Custer  
youngest daughter

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**STORY**  
**of the**  
**FRANK KNOWLES**  
**FAMILY**

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## STORY OF THE FRANK KNOWLES FAMILY

### CHAPTER I

"Lizzie" the rosy cheeked youth asked, "have you thought of going West to start our home? I have been thinking that, if you approved, I could go on ahead and when I had a job and could send for you, you could come out and we could be married there.

Elizabeth was startled somewhat and yet knowing Frank's very venturesome spirit, she parried a bit. Having met the rosy cheeked farmer at a friend's home, the friendship ripened as Frank called for her in his buggy on Friday nights and took her to a husking bee or some other neighborhood party. Only three weeks ago he had asked this intelligent brown haired girl to be his wife. And now he was actually thinking seriously of the future. As always Elizabeth was not so impulsive as Frank and needed time to think over this pronouncement which would determine their future. His eagerness to settle the matter now rather over awed the slight girl, who had been teaching for three years, braving Minnesota winter weather to teach in the district schools. She was a most capable teacher who could control the most "unruly" boys although she was rather small in stature. She was not over five feet two and half inches tall and never tipped the scales above 115 pounds. She had a way which made her able to guide the older children who sometimes were older than she and boasted of how they ran the "other" teacher out.

When Elizabeth was still a young girl, her parents, Lemuel and Nancy Morton, moved with their family from near Halifax, Nova Scotia to Dundas, Minnesota. Like her grandmother, Foote,

she had that beautiful clear complexion that could easily have won a fortune in complexion soap. Elizabeth assured all, however, that no soap should be used on the face. Neither should there be any powder nor any other addition to the skin. Only washing in clear cold water could bring that velvety luster which was her pride. Coffee or tea? Oh! No! Elizabeth could be heard to remark. "I never drink anything but hot or cold water. Coffee makes your skin so muddy looking".

There were eight children in Morton family: Alice, Charles, Caleb, Elizabeth, Olive, Laura, Wilson and Wishard. With cousins, aunts, and uncles around, it was hard for Elizabeth to think of leaving them all to go to the West. The Indians ! Yes, the Indians !!!

Frank seemed so serious and so sure that they could carve out a place for themselves in this Western country that she finally gave her consent. Frank was jubilant. "Lizzie", he would say, "there is nothing for me to do here in the winter but shovel snow or protect ourselves from the inclement weather. Of course, there is some carpenter work, but the farms are all taken. I would like to own a farm of my own. I am sure the West is the place for us. If others can do it, we can too." That night as he thoughtfully drove home, he whistled his happiness and laid plans for an immediate departure. He was more than happy for Frank's father, Ebenezer Cram Knowles, who was then a representative in the Minnesota legislature, yearly had an attack of bronchitis. In the back of Frank's mind was the thought that if the climate was as mild as represented, perhaps he could persuade his father and mother to follow him to the great West.

So, 1877 found Frank in northern California plying his trade in building homes and helping build the flume near Chico. By January 1878

he had sent for Elizabeth and they were married January 17, 1878 at Marysville, California. There they lived until coming to Oregon in May of that year.

Stirred by tales of the Pacific Northwest by some of the workmen, specifically one John Bachelder, who was the Uncle of Alma, Ernest, and Oscar Funk, Frank felt the urge to see that country. The Indian reservation on the Siuslaw had been thrown open to the public in 1876 and a railroad was to be built next year. A young man could do well building. Besides, one could be present to make his selection of the farm land open at that time. "Well, Elizabeth, what do you think about it?" Relying on Frank's judgement, she replied, "Whatever you think is best." Accordingly they went to San Francisco where they spent a week waiting for the sailing of the coal boat "The Empire" which was going as far as Coos Bay. There was but one available bed left on the boat so Lizzie had that. Frank and the four others who were looking for farms went steerage with the Chinamen who were going North to work in the fish canneries. They were four days at sea, then after arriving at Coos Bay, they had two more days by stage North to the Siuslaw country. Arriving at what is now Florence by crossing the river in a rowboat they found there were no white women in the village. There were a few white men but no white women. In fact, there was but one white woman in the whole area. The Zolman Youngs had settled on the Siuslaw River about three miles below what is now Mapleton. Mrs. Young was the grandmother of Alma, Ernest and Oscar Funk.

That was seventy-five years after Lewis and Clark made their memorable trip to the Pacific Northwest. These two intrepid people were my mother and father.

Florence! It had no name then there was a



cannery and a few Indian shacks. No other white woman. However, the Indians were very friendly and took my parents into their cabin where my mother stayed several days while my father went with the other four men to look for farms. My father and mother were the only ones who stayed.

## CHAPTER II

Mother writes of the Indians on the river when they came: "There were six men with their families on the upper river and seven with their families on the lower Siuslaw River. They had a fort where the island is between Mapleton and Seaton. Many other Indians were killed by these Indians who were called the Digger Indians. The other Indians wanted the fish which was so plentiful in the river. I saw a bone spoon handle which had a mark on it for every scalp that had been taken. There was a sweat house about 20 X 30 feet at the mouth of Deadwood Creek. A fire would be made in it, then many who were ill would get in the sweat house and sweat good, then jump into the stream. That was death to a good many Indians. One of Wilson's wives was a doctor. She was decorated on both arms and legs with beads and other so called jewelry. I was told by Mrs. Palmer, an Indian woman, that the doctor drew blood from the sick with her mouth. The last two she treated died, so the Indians tied a stone around her neck and threw her into the Siuslaw River near what is now Mapleton. There are few Indians around Mapleton now. Mrs. Palmer of whom I wrote was one of the younger generation. She lived with a white man. They got upset along the shore of the ocean and she saved his life. He lived with her for a while and then a law was passed that all men who lived with Indian women were required to marry them. They lived in a house now owned by Ed Harrington, about two miles below Mapleton. The Palmers finally moved down by Indian Henry near Acme.



There were burying grounds at Florence, the mouth of the North Fork as well as other places along the Siuslaw. The Digger Indians had their homes near the bank of the river but did not farm much. They hunted and fished and rested lots. They were not particular about their food. For instance, when we lost a cow by her eating too much larkspur, the Indians heard of it and feasted for a while. They feasted also when one of our cows died from eating too much wild parsnip. They would smoke and dry different kinds of fish as well as eels. When these places where they lived and buried their dead were cleaned up guns, beads, and various other things were found. The graves were very shallow. Toys and dishes were fastened to the box which was turned over the graves.

Indian Lester's wife did some of the cooking for part of the men who worked on the road from Cheshire to Seaton. The only fault they found with her cooking was "she did not salt the food".

The home of Indian Buchanan was on a sightly place on a hill overlooking the river at the mouth of South Slough. We were able to get some butter and milk from them in early days.

Among the Indian families at Seaton were Indian Marshal and Indian Lester. I was afraid of them when I arrived. So I used to carry something with me to protect me when I was alone. This was unnecessary as they were very kind to me and laughed at my mistakes when I tried to speak their language. For example, when Frank was ill, our cattle got in our yard and the bull would paw the earth and bellow when he saw me. Indian Marshall came running up to the house and drove the cattle out and put up the fence. Another time, Knowles Creek was too high for the cattle to cross to get hay from the barn. I tried to take some hay up the creek to them, but the current was too strong for me. Indian Marshall was going up Knowles Creek to catch some eels. He caught up with me

and said "Mrs. Knowles, get in my canoe" and he put hay in his canoe and we both fed the cows. He seemed pleased that he could be of help to me.

In the early days when I went North along the ocean, I would see hills of shells several feet high along the ocean beach where the Indians were accustomed to cooking and eating. I will never forget the kindness of Indian Marshall and Indian Wilson."

Mother also wrote: "In the Fall of 1878, the writer went by rowboat to the mouth of the Siuslaw River. The smoke was so dense in many places that the animals came to the river to get away from the fire. The smoke was so dense that we could not see any distance."

### CHAPTER III

Father chose his homestead with the Creek, which bears his name, running through it. Near the creek and the confluence with the Siuslaw River he put down some poles, wigwam shape, and covered them with ferns to make a shelter in which to live.

Mother said, "I cooked out of doors. When it rained, Frank put a roof over the fire. It did not rain much that year." Next he cleared a small plot of ground and planted beans. The rabbits thought the beans were for them and pruned many of them. Our first Fourth of July on the Siuslaw, we had rabbit pot pie for dinner. Rabbits and bread with some maple leaves for greens were our main stay until the potatoes grew. We had no potatoes until Fall."

That Fall my father worked for a while as a carpenter for Mr. Duncan, who owned the cannery in the village near the mouth of the river. They

moved to near the Cannery. While there, mother picked lots of huckleberries. Mr Duncan furnished the cans and had the berries canned in the fish vats. "The berries were so good that winter" writes mother, "when we moved home we had potatoes too. When we wanted them extra good, I roasted them in ashes. We had fish, bear meat and bear oil for butter. That fall we bought a cow and lived high."

After the wigwam type house had served its time, Father built a shack of split shakes near the same spot. He was handy with tools and soon had a rowboat. When he would tire of working at things on land, he would go fishing. Sometimes he would take me along to steer the boat while he was fishing. He was a provident young man and kept some cedar poles in the shack from which to make oars in his free time.

After moving into the split shake shack, it seemed necessary for father to earn more money than he had currently. He went to Gardiner where he worked at his trade. It was Winter time by then and the rains came. That was something the newly-weds had not planned for. The land at the mouth of the creek was rather low. The banks easily overflowed when the rains came. This year was no exception. Mother was alone in the shack, and the water was almost into the shack. The Indians across the river had called to her to come over. This she was planning to do when she got the oars made by using the drawing knife on the cedar poles. But the newly settled white family, the Hadsalls, came and got her. It was a difficult time for her as it was almost time for the birth of their first child, Maud, who was born December 30, 1878.

After this experience with the flood, Father was no longer willing to be away from home with his wife and daughter in danger from the floods. He moved his home to the knoll which projected into the farm land and gave a good view of the

surrounding territory. In choosing this site, Father went ahead and spotted the trail and Mother followed with the gun. In case a bear or deer was spotted, they wanted to be ready to make use of the opportunity for fresh meat. The second shake house was then built on the Knoll.

The house had two rooms and in one was a fireplace which father built of stone. Mother wrote, "We were young and ambitious and we started again." Father cleared land and planted grass seed. They proved the old adage -- necessity is the mother of invention. He fell a sizable fir tree and hewed out the center so fish could be salted in it. That winter he also made wooden dishes, spoons, forks, a bread tray, a deep dish and a water pail. He made furniture as well. Then he carried a hundred pound stone from the creek and made a grind stone. It was the only one on the river above Florence. The only tools and dishes they brought with them from California were: axe, mattox, frying pan, bake-kettle, or dutch oven and a two or three quart pail. Mother cooked over a fire outside for two years. She said "Such good bread and baked beans as we did have, also, "our diet was very meager. In the Spring, we got herring and smoked them in the chimney. Then I knew why they were called "chimney herring". Our diet was improved by using miner's lettuce, dandelions, and tender tips of berry vines and other edible greens.

Mother was fond of telling in later years about her clothes line. "Frank fell a tree near the spot by the creek where I would go to do the washing and I would hang the clothes on the branches of the tree to dry. One day as I was about finished with the washing, a bear came ambling along. I was frightened, so I started pounding on my dishpan as hard as I could and yelling as loudly as I could. The bear started leaving and I'm not sure which or who was more frightened, the bear or I."



Mother had learned to braid the strands made by peeling Hazelwood to make hats and other things. The Hazelwood was peeled and the strands culled and sized. The culled strands were used in starting the fire in the fireplace. It was, no doubt, this custom which led to their first big tragedy. It was in the spring of 1880 while mother was out of the house feeding the calf when little Maud, who was about 15 months old, was found face down in the fireplace. The fire was out but apparently the little girl was trying to do as she had seen her parents do. A trail of strands was found from the pile of culls to the fireplace. That was April, 1880, just a few months before their second child, Mable, was born on July 26, 1880.

The little girl was buried near their home. Later Father carried a small cedar tree and planted it at the foot of her grave. The tree still stands today and is of immense size. This area later became the community cemetery. Few graves remain there now however, as most, including all of the Knowles and Morton families, have been moved to the I.O.O.F. cemetery on the hill near Mapleton.

#### CHAPTER IV

Apparently Father had written to his relatives in Minnesota as if he were pleased with the climate and the bounty here so that they were intrigued with the country which was his. His older brother, Albert Person, with his wife, Lillian and small daughter, Ollie, were the first to arrive in 1882. Shortly thereafter his Father, Ebenezer Cram, and Mother, Lucinda, with their son, George Oren, and daughter, Cora Ella, who were not settled in Minnesota, came. Father met them in Eugene and they were the first to come over the new road to Seaton in 1885. Albert settled on a homestead about a mile farther up the creek from Frank, and

Grandfather bought 10 acres from father

and built a comfortable house there. When this house was later razed, it was found to have been built with square nails. George Oren operated a store at Seaton for a short time and Cora Ella taught school until she married William Henry Weatherson. Mr. Weatherson also taught school until starting the weekly Newspaper "The West" in Florence.

Mother must have written to her family in Minnesota about the wonderful climate also as one brother who was ill came west with his wife and two children. His illness was fatal so he was buried in the cemetery at Point Terrace. His wife and two children returned to Minnesota. However, a sister and her husband along with five children, the Harper Workman family, came. Uncle Caleb, a mute, came with them. He lived with my Aunt when Uncle Harper went to the gold fields of Alaska to win his fortune. Then there was grandpa Morton, who came to live with us after Grandma Morton died. He was a gentle man who loved the out of doors. He was fond of walking to the knoll to get a twig of cedar. He loved the scent and would keep the twig around. He would also stop at the spring for a drink of cool water enroute. Mother and father divided their large bedroom and made two so he would not need to climb the stairs. Uncle Caleb, although he was mute, was a good workman and would often come to work for father.

While the relatives had been coming the buildings on the farm had changed. A two story house built of shakes was erected on the high bank of the Siuslaw River, across Knowles Creek from the first shake shack. It had a bedroom, sitting room and kitchen on the first floor, and two bedrooms upstairs. To the rear was a long shed to house the wagon and the wood. The outdoor plumbing was reached by going through the woodshed partway and then to the left.

While these changes were being made at the



Knowles farm, post offices were being established. Seaton was established in 1885 with W. W. Neely as postmaster. Acme was established in 1885 also. I do not know the name of the postmaster. The post office at Florence was established in 1888 and the one at Point Terrace in June, 1889. At Glenada there was no post office until 1890.

Meanwhile, more Minnesota neighbors and relatives came West and settled on Knowles Creek. Grandmother's sister, Marie Vanderford, came and bought a half acre between Grandfather's place and Father's. The George B. Camps came and settled on a farm between the two Knowles brothers. A cousin of Mrs. Albert Knowles, Mrs. Phillip Jackson with her husband and two sons, Jim and Andrew settled a bit farther up the creek than Albert. So now there were residing on Knowles Creek: Frank Knowles, Marie Vanderford, E. C. Knowles, a Mr. Harney, George B. Camp, A. P. Knowles, H. B. Grey, Ole Myran, and Phillip Jackson. Mr Harney did not stay nor did H. B. Grey, who sold his farm to Albert Knowles.

While Knowles Creek was being settled other people had taken advantage of the opening of the reservation and settled on the river. It became necessary to form a school district. The first district was organized in 1885. To do that, it was necessary to take in pupils from Lake Creek to within five miles of Florence, and that included one married woman. W. H. Weatherson was the first teacher.

About this time the Bean family came and started a hotel on the bank of the river at what is now Mapleton. Mrs. Bean, enamored with the beautiful maple trees on the bank of the river in front of the hotel, called the place Maple Town. This name stuck but was later shortened to Mapleton.

After the hotel opened, daily trips to

Florence were started. The "Mink" was captained by Amasa Hurd, brother of O. W. Hurd of the Hurd Lumber and Navigation Company, and made the daily trips to Florence. Prior to this residents who needed to make the trip had to make it by row boat. If they went the entire distance, from Florence to Mapleton, it was fifteen miles. If they went with the tide, that helped, of course. Mr. Niccolle, our nearest neighbor, was well along in years and still make an occasional trip by row boat to Florence.

Mapleton was just a mile down river from Seaton. Navigation at low tide could be treacherous for boats other than a row boats. There was an island midstream and near the other shore was a large submerged rock. No doubt this was a factor in changing the place of the post office from Seaton to Mapleton in 1896.

With the advent of the steamer from Mapleton to Florence each day, it was convenient to send milk to customers and they in turn, returned the cans which father picked up each night. Sometimes father would meet friends at the boat and bring them over to stay the night with us.

At about this time a daily stage had begun making trips from Mapleton to Eugene. Leaving Mapleton at 6:00 A.M. and changing horses four times enroute. They would arrive in Eugene, in the summer, any time from 6:00 to 9:00 P.M. But in the winter they did well to arrive by midnight. The stage did not have a cover. Lester Ogden was the choice driver.

Yes, the farm had grown. The young people would go out every morning to look over the farm to see what had grown since the day before. Their family had increased also. It now consisted of Mable, born in 1880; Grace Lillian, born in 1882 and died in 1895; Rosa Jane born March 2, 1886 and Ruth, the youngest, born September 14, 1892.

Neighbors were very close then. They helped each other whenever possible. Father and Mother were at first doctor and dentist for the community. Father had a pair of forceps and was a strong man so he could pull teeth. Father and Mother also had two doctor books and were often called to help as doctors, if available, were fifteen miles away by row boat.

A house built of lumber sawn from timber on the farm, was under construction in 1894, when the slide in the river just above Seaton occurred which took the lives of some of the Andrews family that year. A son, Warren, was rescued after he had ridden the logs as far as Point Terrace. The water came exceptionally high and was in the shake house on the bank of the river. It seemed necessary to move into the house under construction, since it was being built on higher ground about a hundred yards away. The youngest child, then two years old cried to go back home. She remembers hearing the family tell about her having cried to go home. This house being constructed on the low part of the hill had a natural basement under part of the house. Father used this for a shop. It was never inclosed. That house was the last used on the farm. On the main floor there was a "sitting room", dining room, kitchen, pantry and Mother and fathers' large bedroom. There were four bedrooms and two attics for storage upstairs. A bedroom was needed for a hired man and one for the hired girl. We two girls who were home shared a bedroom, that left one for company. Mable was grown by the time the house was finished and had been teaching school in the Hartly district one term. By then, she had married Joe Slemmons of Kentucky in May, 1899.

There were three porches. One side porch held the rain barrel, The washing machine and the soft soap barrel. From that porch was the uncovered walkway to the wood shed which usually was well filled with wood. The attic was used for the

field corn which was used in the house and for "Johnny cake" and for squash. The attic was reached by means of a ladder. There we also kept the grist mill. In the corner of the woodshed next to the hill was the smoke house where the corncobs and vine-maple were used for smoking bacon, hams and fish. The other side porch was used for entrance as it had steps leading up to the door of the dining room. The pump which always had to be primed was also on that porch, at the right. The dog, Bounce and the cat, Paul, also claimed that porch as their home. Paul, our cat was a good mouser. He would bring his catch and lay it down until someone would pet him and say "nice Paul" before eating it. If we were gone for much of the day we would find more than one of the rodents lying on the porch. He would not touch them until he had been thanked for his labor. He was often allowed in the house behind the heater.

Bounce was a shepherd dog, but he also seemed like part of the family. Although he had a place outside the door beside the cat, he was never allowed in the house. He would always come to greet us when we were returning from away. We could say to him, "Bounce, go get the cows", and he would do just that, bringing them in down the locust lined lane where they waited to get into the barn. When ever anything was wrong at the barn Bounce would come to Father's bedroom window and bark until Father responded.

Then there was the time there was the fire in the boat across the river at Mapleton at night. Bounce came to Father's bedroom window as usual and barked. Father tried to shut him up but to no avail. Finally Father decided that something must be wrong and needed attention, so he got up to see. The light was coming from the place where the boat was moored. By then, we had a telephone so Father phoned across the river and go help for the blazing boat. Again, when my sister died. She had been ill several days in my parents bedroom.



Bounce howled most of the the night. He knew what had happened, I am sure as he was very sensitive to all the family.

There was a spring of very cold water about a quarter of a mile from the house. In summer, if we had a small pail with a lid, we would very often take Bounce along and give him the small pail and he would carry it all the way home. He would even help bring in the wood when this was being done. He knew, of course, that he would be rewarded for this service.

But it was not all work. The grove that was near the house in the bend of the creek offered a wonderful place for community gatherings. One fourth of July, I remember there were two croquet grounds, a place to pitch horse shoes, a platform for the program and seats made of boards on chunks of wood. The maple trees made a wonderful shade so the community came and celebrated together. The children were free to play as there was ample room. On Christmas all the relatives came for that observance. There would be a nice big tree in the corner of the dining room which was decorated after the children went to bed. We were not allowed to go near the tree until the second night when everyone was there. The tree had real candles on it and were lighted for a time. Dangerous! of course. But we did not think of that then.

Today, Father might be called a truck gardner. He had the first gasoline launch at Mapleton and after using the rowboat for rowing to the place he wished to go, it was a luxury to be able to travel faster and easier. During the Summer, he often made two trips to Florence per week often stopping at way points. On these trips, he took bunches of carrots, beets, onions, radishes and asparagus as well as cabbage, summer squash, apples, plums, and different kinds of berries. The children picked the berries for a small stipend and the apples for

ten cents a bushel. Mother also had the home made butter and if there were butchering of pork, she would make head cheese. Mother was very fond of clams, hence, Father would usually contact Indian Dan, who dug clams, and get a five gallon canful. Failing that, he would usually stop and dig a few dozen himself. The clams had been planted in the mudflats.

As the farm prospered and more products were supplied, Father needed more storage space for his products in Florence. So he purchased a lot on the main street, between the street and the river and erected a two story wooden building. The lower floor he divided and made a millinery shop for Mrs. Kanoff. The other side was a meat market. At the rear of the meat market he retained storage for himself. The upstairs was made into an apartment for rent.

Dr. Saubert had come to Acme and built a large house on the hill. My sister, Rosa, had typhoid fever so they asked the Doctor if Mother could bring her to the home and care for her there. Permission was granted, so Mother went to the home with Rosa and cared for her there. Father and the youngest daughter stayed home. All that Ruth knew how to cook was cornstarch pudding. To conserve dishwashing, Father insisted that we clean off our plates so that they could be turned over for the next meal. In about a month, my sister recovered and she and mother came back home.

After the new house on the farm had been completed it seemed adviseable to erect another building on the bank of the river which might serve for providing a place for those who were helping with the logging to have their noon meals. It might also serve for activities for the community. Hence, a two story wooden structure was built. There were three rooms on the first floor which could also serve for storage when necessary. But they were used for a dining room while



the logging operations were going on.

Beside the building, a high dock was built on piles for the storage of cord wood. This was cut from wood that was waste during the logging. It was for sale to any one who wished. It was obtained by chute from the upper dock to the lower dock.

The building was also used for grange which was organized by H. C. Wheeler in 1902. It was first named Fir Grange # 312. Master was Frank Knowles with Mrs. Knowles, lecturer and Ollie Knowles, daughter of Albert Knowles, secretary. That Grange became dormant in 1905.

## CHAPTER V

Grandfather Knowles took a cold in 1902 and it turned into pneumonia and he died. He was buried on the Knoll. What about Grandmother? She had a choice small rocking chair which she was very fond of using in front of the window. She should not and could not stay alone. The best thing would be to come to our house and occupy the bedroom that Grandfather Morton had had. That was tried for a time, but grandmother still looked for Ebenezer and was restless. So after Rosa Jane was married in December 1903 to William E. Wells, preparations were made to move to Grandmother's home. That meant a great change for Mother and Father. The farm work must go on the same as usual.

At that time, Father had employed Otto Agee to help on the farm. He was a man of a family and lived a half mile up the river from the farm. He became ill and Mother and Father, as was their custom, went to help what they could. It was an illness of several days length. Mother and Father took turns in helping, but he did not recover.

Mother was very tired, of course. After doing her own work and helping the neighbors, she had made the burial garment. It was an unusually warm day and the sun beat down on the Knoll where Otto was buried. The combination of the hot sun and the weariness made Mother very ill. There was still no doctor near, but when he arrived he diagnosed it as a sunstroke. There was but one bedroom down stairs so it was necessary to move Mother down. Other arrangements were made for Grandma. She went to her son Albert's home for a while but it seemed Cora Ella was better since she had overcome her problem of looking for Ebenezer, for her to go to her daughter's in Florence.

A hired girl was employed to help with the work, as Mother was ill for some time but did gradually improve. When she was able, we returned to our own home, from Grandmother's. My parents had their own problems also. There was no high school at Mapleton and the youngest daughter had reviewed the eighth grade well to get it good so she was ready for high school. Mother was not taking the heat of the Summer sun well and needed a change. So, in the Fall of 1907 found Mother and I in the apartment in the new building at Florence. I could attend high school and it would be cooler for Mother. Father remained on the farm and came to town some times to stay over night. When he came, he and Mr. Carman, the merchant who had a store next door, would play chess until late. Though I think sometimes it was not all chess they talked.

The next Fall, Father rented the farm and bought Mr. Carman's store. That meant their youngest daughter, Ruth, had had one year of high school and would take the second year at Florence. Three of us living in the small quarters made a difference in our way of life. Soon they bought a small cottage from Mr. Cobb, a few blocks away and we moved there. Now Mother was free to find something to occupy her time. She had had no time to

help in what church there was at Mapleton. Now she could attend church and help out there. Soon she had a class of boys which she enjoyed. They were from the ages of six to twelve. Then in a little while she also had the cradle roll. She also had canaries. She took the canaries to the church with her to sing with the cradle roll for their promotion exercises. The birds' voices blended beautifully with the children when they sang. Sometimes she took her boys on a camping expedition out to the lakes. They took their bedding and stayed for a week at a time. The boys loved it and so did Mother. The boys would do anything for Mrs. Knowles.

She often had the Ladies Aid or Missionary Society as it is sometimes called today. Whenever the presiding Elder came to town he would usually stay at our house. Father rarely attended church, but he would often put a box of groceries on the Minister's porch if he could remain unseen when he delivered them. Or if groceries were needed, he would contribute them if he could remain unknown.

The store prospered. More dock space needed to be built to enable the ocean going ships to dock there to disgorge freight. The hours were confining. No doubt from about 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. Of course, in the Winter time, the hours would be shorter. Things prospered at least for a few years, until a fire took almost the whole city block of front street.

A rather humorous incident occurred during the fire in 1910. There were shoes on display on top of the boxes in the window. Only one shoe was visible, of course. Someone saved a whole armful of the single shoes.

But undaunted, Father built another building. This time, it was of concrete. Things got going again and he needed more help than I could

give him in the store. He employed our next door neighbor, J. U. Goode. It was his small son who often came over to visit mother and they would have a teaparty. Mother made cambric tea for both of them and they would sit at the table and drink their tea and visit. When he went home, he would ask his mother to have Mrs. Knowles teach her to make cambric tea. This, of course, is hot water with cream and sugar.

After Father got things prospering again, a man came into the store and reaching out his hand to shake hands, said "Hello Frank". They talked for some time about various things. When the gentleman left, I asked him who the man might be? "Darn if I know" Father said. I presume that the friendship must have lasted back to the time when Father pulled teeth or there was a bed for the night offered someone.

When Father first started in the grocery business, the freight all came on sailing ships, mostly from San Francisco. Soon it was possible to have freight come from Portland on gas powered ships and have the boat stop at Yaquina to pick up barrels of flour which had come by rail from Albany.

Shortly, he had a branch store at Mapleton with Ono S. Phelps as Manager. Father became a member of the City Council in Florence while he was in business. There was an incident which seems rather fitting to tell here. The store was next door to a gambling place. One of Father's good customers like to gamble and he was not a good winner and left his bills unpaid. He had children who needed shoes and other things. Father talked with him quite a bit and finally paid him \$25.00 to quit gambling. That lasted a few months before long the owner of the gaming establishment paid the man \$25.00 to start again.

After a few years the store was almost too



much for Father and one clerk. The Store in Mapleton was discontinued. The opportunity came for him to sell the store to the Rice Brothers and A. O. Knowles. This he did and found himself free to look after other business and rest some. By then, he had a car and made frequent trips to Eugene and Portland to visit. He bought an acre in the western part of Eugene and built a small six room house on it for rent. Then he bought another house for rent. That house had a large lot, so he built a two-story garage on the rear of it so they could come to Eugene and stay in their own place. Here he left the garage on the first floor, but had an oil stove and bed on the second floor.

Meanwhile, they had sold the farm at Mapleton to a Lloyd Saubert. That then severed all his ties with Mapleton. He was free to do something else. But what? Finally he decided to start a little *store* in a building on the board walk on the water front in Glenada.

For a few years, he was in business there going across on the ferry every day or rowing across the river. He was even Postmaster for a short time. But that too tired him and he sold and really retired. He had come to Eugene to put a new roof on the first building he had erected there and became ill. He spent some time in the hospital. Then the doctors were not so skilled in certain ailments. He had surgery and died in a few days in May 1929.

Mother then sold her home in Florence and had a small cottage built for her in Eugene. Her sister, Mrs. Workman, came to live with her but after a few years the yard work got to be too much for them. Aunt Laura went to live at Hood River near her daughter and Mother rented two rooms from her daughter, Rosa Jane, Mrs. Wells in San Diego and lived there until she died in 1948. Both Mother and Father are interred in the

I.O.O.F. cemetery at Mapleton.

In the Centennial history of Oregon is an art-  
about this family:

"November 1876; Frank Knowles moved from Minnesota to California where he settled briefly in Chico and Marysville, moving to Mapleton, Oregon in May 1878 where he filed for a 160 acre homestead.

Frank and his wife, Elizabeth began their married life on an Indian reservation. Frank was doctor and dentist to many of the early residents as there was no doctor nearer than fifteen miles by rowboat. There they lived for 29 years, in 1907 moving to Florence where he engaged in the general merchandise business. A successful and prominent early pioneer of the West and a highly esteemed business man in Mapleton and Florence. "

Ruth Knowles Custer











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